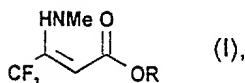


What is claimed is:

1. A process for the preparation of a 4,4,4-trifluoro-3-methylamino-crotonic acid ester of formula I



wherein

R is C₁-C₄alkyl, and

Me is methyl,

by dehydrating the corresponding trifluoroacetoacetic acid ester and methylamine in the presence of an inert reaction medium and of a C₁-C₄carboxylic acid, in which process the reaction is carried out at a temperature of from 75 to 100°C without isolation of intermediates and the water that forms during the reaction is removed continuously from the reaction medium.

2. A process according to claim 1, wherein in formula I R is ethyl.
3. A process according to claim 1, wherein a water-immiscible reaction medium is used and the aqueous phase is separated from the reaction medium.
4. A process according to claim 1, wherein the appropriate alcohol is added to the reaction medium and the water is removed by distillation.
5. A process according to claim 1, wherein acetic acid is used as the C₁-C₄carboxylic acid.
6. A process according to claim 1, which is carried out at a temperature of from 80 to 85°C.
7. A process according to claim 1, wherein there is used as the reaction medium hexane, cyclohexane, methylcyclohexane, toluene, xylene, or a mixture thereof.

8. A process according to claim 1, wherein methylcyclohexane is used as the reaction medium.

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